



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES BUDGET AMENDMENT TO SUPPORT MAYOR EMANUEL'S CHICAGO
LEGAL PROTECTION FUND**

The Fund will focus on ensuring all immigrants facing an imminent threat of deportation have access to legal services

The Chicago City Council today approved Mayor Rahm Emanuel's amendment to the 2017 budget that redirects \$1.3 million in support of the Chicago Legal Protection Fund. Earlier this month, the Mayor announced the creation of the Fund in response to a critical need to increase legal services for immigrant communities across the City amidst threats of deportation following the Presidential election.

"Our immigrant communities have played an important role in shaping our City and we need their talent, drive and determination to continue moving Chicago forward," said Mayor Emanuel. "This Fund will provide the resources necessary to ensure these Chicago families have the access to the legal services they need to remain safe, secure and supported in our city."

Using \$1.3 million in available city of Chicago property tax rebate funds, the Fund will serve more than 20,000 immigrants through community-based outreach, education, legal screenings, and legal representation, including courtroom representation.

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) will manage the Fund and provide resources to two delegate agencies; Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) and The Resurrect Project (TRP).

"Strengthening the legal aid community's ability to reach immigrant families in every Chicago neighborhood is critical to ensuring people can apply for immigration status and access protections available under our laws, and to upholding residents' due process rights in the wake of immigration enforcement actions. When people know there are trustworthy and affordable immigration legal services in their communities, they are less likely to fall prey to fraudulent practitioners that take their money and put them at risk of deportation," said Mary Meg McCarthy, Executive Director, National Immigrant Justice Center, a Heartland Alliance Program.

"We applaud Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago City Council for their support of the Chicago Legal Protection Fund because this partnership will enhance the city's commitment to being a welcoming city for immigrants," said Raul Raymundo, TRP's CEO.

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

The agencies will focus on ensuring all immigrants facing an imminent threat of deportation have access to legal services. They will also work to integrate legal support from attorneys with Community Navigators rooted in Chicago's many ethnic communities to provide outreach, education and assistance to immigrant families.

"I am proud that City Council has come together to approve the Fund. It upholds our values as a sanctuary city and provides immediately resources for those families who are struggling with fear and the threat of deportation," said Alderman Danny Solis.

The agencies will be responsible for providing regular updates to DFSS and to the Chicago is With You Task Force and generating quarterly overviews for the City Council Committee on Human Relations.

The Chicago Legal Defense Fund is one of several actions the Emanuel Administration has taken since the November election to remind all residents that they are welcome in the City of Chicago.

Today, the City Council passed a resolution reinforcing Chicago's commitment to maintaining its status as a Welcoming City. The City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) Board of Trustees recently adopted a similar resolution affirming the college system's status as a Welcoming Campus, which protects students from discrimination or harassment based on immigration status.

"Today is a reaffirmation that the Mayor and the City Council are committed to protecting the humanity of our immigrant and refugee communities. We don't want communities living in fear of hatred and discrimination; we need to stand united in support of all families," said Alderman Ameya Pawar.

On December 7, Mayor Emanuel presented a letter to President-elect Donald Trump urging him to continue the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program until Congress modernizes the immigration system and provides a more permanent form of relief for the over one million young people who were brought to the United States before they were 16 and are eligible for the program.

"By supporting those in imminent threat of deportation through legal education, consultations and representation in immigration cases, we are helping residents and families to build stability," said Department of Family and Support Services Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. "We are empowering them to thrive, which benefits all of Chicago."

"No community should live in fear, and it is our responsibility to find new ways to protect the least of these residents. Our diversity is our biggest strength, and this Fund shows our commitment to moving forward together as one Chicago," said Alderman Jason C. Ervin.

Earlier this month, Mayor Emanuel also joined U.S. Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman Luis Gutierrez in launching the new "Chicago is With You," task force that is collaborating on mental health, legal services, employer communications, and education policies to ensure the City is delivering comprehensive services to immigrants, refugees and other disenfranchised communities.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has launched a series of initiatives that improve the immigrant community's access to services, expand new and existing immigrant businesses, and welcome and

celebrate Chicago's diverse immigrant communities. These initiatives include launching the Cities for Citizenship Campaign with the Mayors of New York City and Los Angeles, which has grown into a bipartisan effort which works with 30 City and county leaders across America.

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